

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11  
ACDA-12 IO-13 BIB-01 /092 W  
-----129069 021150Z /11  
R 021110Z MAY 78  
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1231  
AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

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E. O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, PINS, UR  
SUBJECT: MAY DAY IN MOSCOW

REF: 77 MOSCOW 5972

SUMMARY: VISIBLE EVIDENCE OF THE CULT OF BREZHNEV INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY DURING THIS YEAR'S MAY DAY DEMONSTRATION - LARGE POSTERS, QUOTES FROM HIS SPEECHES, REFERENCE TO HIS ACHIEVEMENTS (BOTH IN POSTERS AND FROM TV INTERVIEWEES), EVEN A FEW "THANK YOU, LEONID IL'ICH" BANNERS. BREZHNEV HIMSELF LOOKED NORMAL TO US. HIS GAIT WAS SOMEWHAT STIFF, BUT WITHIN NORMAL RANGE FOR HIM AND HE APPEARED TO HOLD UP REASONABLY WELL THROUGHOUT TWO HOUR PERFORMANCE. ON INTERNATIONAL SIDE, ANTI-NEUTRON BOMB THEME WAS HEAVILY PLAYED, WITH SOME ATTENTION GIVEN TO OTHER DISARMAMENT ISSUES AND A FEW ANTI-ISRAELI POSTERS DISPLAYED. END SUMMARY.

1. LEADERSHIP. ORDER OF LEADERSHIP ON MAUSOLEUM HAD KOSYGIN, THEN USTINOV TO RIGHT OF BREZHNEV. TO BREZHNEV'S LEFT, IN ORDER, WERE SUSLOV, KIRILENKO, GRISHIN, MAZUROV, GROMYKO, PELSHE, ANDROPOV, KULAKOV, PONOMAREV, CHERNENKO,  
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SOLOMENTSEV, KUZNETSOV, DEMICHEV, KAPITONOV, DOLGIKH, RUSAKOV, RYABOV. ONLY ABSENTEE AMONG MOSCOW-BASED LEADERSHIP WAS CPSU SECRETARY ZIMYANIN, WHO HAD BEEN PRESENT AT CLOSING SESSION OF 18TH KOMSOMOL MEETING THREE DAYS BEFORE. TV COVERAGE JUST AFTER LEADERSHIP MOUNTED MAUSOLEUM SHOWED BREZHNEV MOVING FROM ONE END OF PLATFORM TO OTHER WAVING TO CROWD. FLANKING AND FOLLOW-

ING SLIGHTLY BEHIND HIM WERE KOSYGIN AND SUSLOV, WHO, AS FAR AS WE COULD TELL, WERE ONLY OTHER POLITBURO MEMBERS TO PERFORM THIS PARTICULAR RITE.

2. BREZHNEV SEEMED TO US TO HOLD UP REASONABLY WELL THROUGHOUT TWO HOUR PERFORMANCE. HIS GAIT ON ENTERING AND DDEPARTING WAS SOMEWHAT STIFF, BUT WITHIN NORMAL RANGE FOR HIM. POLCOUNSELOR NOTED THAT AS BREZHNEV WAS APPROACHING MAUSOLEUM, TWO ATTENDANTS HOVERED NEARBY, HANDS EXTENDED AND OBVIOUSLY PREPARED TO ASSIST IF HE NEEDED HELP IN DESCENDING THREE STEPS, BUT HE DID NOT.

3. TV CAMERAS SHOWED THE ENTIRE LEADERSHIP THREE OR FOUR TIMES, BUT CONCENTRATED EITHER ON CLOSE-UPS OF BREZHNEV ALONE OR FOURSOME COMPRISED OF KOSYGIN, BREZHNEV, SUSLOV AND KIRILENKO. TOWARD END OF DEMONSTRATION, WE NOTED DURING ONE OF CLOSE-UP SHOTS THAT PELSHE HAD MOVED OVER TO KIRILENKO'S LEFT, INDICATING EITHER THAT SOME OF LEADERSHIP DID NOT LAST OUT ENTIRE DEMONSTRATION OR THAT SOME SHIFTING OF PLACE OCCURRED DURING THE TWO HOURS.

4. BREZHNEV CULT. BREZHNEV WAS ONLY CURRENT LEADER HONORED BY LARGE FLOATS, MANY OF WHICH INCLUDED QUOTATIONS FROM HIS SPEECHES. OTHER FLOATS REFERRED TO HIS RECENT VISIT TO SOVIET FAR EAST, HIS RECENTLY PUBLISHED BOOKS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND HIS ORDER OF VICTORY MEDAL. SOVIETS INTERVIEWED ON TV INVARIABLY WENT INTO ENCOMIUMS OF PRAISE FOR LEONID IL'ICH, ON SUBJECTS RANGING FROM HIS WORLD WAR II ACHIEVEMENTS TO HIS RECENT FAR EAST TRIP. ALMOST ALL FLOATS/POSTER CARRIED QUOTES FROM BREZHNEV SPEECHES/WORKS AND SEVERAL CARRIED "THANK YOU" MESSAGES TO BREZHNEV FOR HIS ACHIEVEMENTS. ALL IN ALL, IT SEEMED TO US THAT EVIDENCE OF BREZHNEV CULT INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY, SYMBOLIZED BY HUGE, GARLANDED PORTRAIT WHICH WAS PULLED PAST AT VERY BEGINNING OF DEMONSTRATION.

5. AS DEMONSTRATION ENDED, TV FOCUSED ONCE AGAIN ON BREZHNEV AS SUSLOV TURNED TO HIM, SAID SOMETHING AND STARTED TO MOVE AWAY FROM FRONT OF REVIEWING STAND. SUSLOV GAVE EVERY APPEARANCE OF A MAN RELIEVED THAT THE ORDEAL WAS OVER AND READY TO DEPART POST HASTE. BREZHNEV REMAINED IN PLACE AND SUSLOV, AS THE CAMERA CUT OUT, HAD COME TO A SHARP HALT AND WAS APPROACHING THE FRONT OF THE REVIEWING STAND, APPARENTLY TO AWAIT BREZHNEV'S DECISION ON WHEN TO LEAVE.

6. OTHER DOMESTIC THEMES. THERE WERE MORE

FLOATS AND POSTERS CITING PRODUCTION LEVELS AND GIVING VARIOUS ECONOMIC FIGURES THIS YEAR THAN LAST. A FEW POSTERS, BUT NOT IT SEEMED TO US A PARTICULARLY SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER, REFERRED TO THE NEW CONSTITUTION. THE PARTY AND THE KOMSOMOL WERE FEATURED IN NUMEROUS DISPLAYS WITH THE KOMSOMOL, IT SEEMED TO US, GETTING SIGNIFICANTLY MORE ATTENTION THIS YEAR THAN LAST.

7. INTERNATIONAL THEMES. THERE WERE A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF ANTI-NEUTRON BOMB POSTERS AND FLOATS NONE OF WHICH REFERRED SPECIFICALLY TO THE UNITED STATES. OTHER DISARMAMENT THEMES WERE ALSO COVERED, ALONG WITH THE USUAL GENERAL STATEMENTS FAVORING PEACE AND OPPOSING IMPERIALISM. A NEW WRINKLE WAS ADDED THIS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11  
ACDA-12 IO-13 BIB-01 /092 W  
-----129096 021149Z /64

R 021110Z MAY 78  
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
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YEAR, AS SEVERAL ANTI-ISRAELI POSTERS WERE ROLLED OR CARRIED PAST, INCLUDING ONE WHICH DEPICTED AN ARAB SMASHING HIS FIST THROUGH A STAR OF DAVID MADE OF BARBED WIRE. AFRICAN SOLIDARITY WAS COVERED GENERALLY, WITH NO SPECIFIC MENTION OF ETHIOPIA OR ANGOLA.

8. IMPRESSIONS OF DOWNTOWN MOSCOW.

--BOOKSTORE WINDOW'S MAY DAY DISPLAY INCLUDED LARGE  
PICTURE OF LENIN CAPTIONED WITH A QUOTE FROM BREZHNEV -  
THE FIRST SUCH A COMBINATION WE HAVE SEEN.

--LARGE NUMBERS OF STANDS SET UP ALONG PRINCIPAL  
BOULEVARDS SELLING CAKES AND HOT TEA, OTHERS SELLING  
GAS-FILLED BALLOONS AND SOUVENIRS. FAMILIES BY THE  
THOUSANDS STROLLING BOULEVARDS IN HOLIDAY MOOD ENJOYING  
COLD BUT SUNNY DAY.

--SELECTED SUPERMARKETS OPEN AND WELL STOCKED WITH  
FRUIT (LEMONS, ORANGES AND APPLES), FRESH MEAT AND  
RARER BACON, DAIRY PRODUCTS, BUT MOST POPULAR SECTIONS  
WERE LIQUOR COUNTERS WHERE PLENTIFUL SUPPLIES OF VODKA  
SOLD AT FROM 4.12 TO 6.10 RUBLES FOR ONE HALF LITER.  
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LIBATION:

--WITHIN TWENTY MINUTES OF PARADE'S CONCLUSION RED  
SQUARE WAS SWEEPED AND SPRAYED BY ARMY OF STREETCLEANING  
TRUCKS. AS SOON AS AREA WAS OPENED EMBOFF  
APPROACHED RED SQUARE ALONG RIVER AND NOTICED STRETCH  
OF UNSWEEPED SIDEWALK. IN THIS 100 FOOT STRETCH OF  
SIDEWALK, 14 EMPTY VODKA BOTTLES, 2 CHAMPAGNE, 4 WINE  
AND 8 EMPTY BEER BOTTLES WERE STREWN AMONG THE USUAL  
TRASH OF A PARADE ROUTE.

--RESTRICTION: STROLLERS NOT ALLOWED WITHIN SEVERAL  
BLOCKS OF KREMLIN WHERE ONLY "SELECTED"  
CROWDS HAD BEEN BUSED IN.

--AFTER PARADE EMBOFF COUNTED 3 MILITARY CONVOYS OF 17  
TRUCKS EACH LEAVING KREMLIN AREA. TWO OTHER CONVOYS  
WERE OBSERVED PARKED NEXT TO BOLSHOI THEATER AND HOTEL  
ROSSIYA. TOTAL ESTIMATED NUMBER OF SOLDIERS SEEN IN  
TRUCKS, 1500. ANOTHER EMBASSY OBSERVER SPOTTED  
SOLDIERS DISMOUNTED FROM TRUCKS AND ARMED WITH AK-47'S  
DURING PARADE. IT IS SAID TROOPS ARE HIDDEN IN  
CLOSED DOWNTOWN METRO STOPS DURING PARADE. TOON

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** REPORTS, PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS, MAY DAY, LABOR DAY  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 02 may 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1978MOSCOW09531  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
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**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 4  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 77 MOSCOW 5972  
**Retention:** 0  
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**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 05 may 2005  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** N/A  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 2519258  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** MAY DAY IN MOSCOW  
**TAGS:** PINT, PINS, UR  
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**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014